

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
January 3, 2021

“The amount of time I spend with either a person or a thing determines just how much I value that person or thing.”

This new year of 2021 offers us an opportunity to re-examine our Catholic faith in light of the Archbishop’s call to dedicate this year to both the Eucharist and the parish. If you either attended the Christmas Vigil Mass or watched it on video, you heard me, in the homily, explain how I want to instead build up to a deeper understanding of the two through prayer and reflection. Allow me to begin by proposing a question to all of you - “How much are you invested in our Catholic faith?” Perhaps this example will help explain my question. Suppose you were to purchase two pairs of shoes. One pair cost \$20 and the other cost \$120. Would you care for and treat the shoes with equal care? I am guessing that some would, but most would not. I think this is only natural since you have more invested in one pair of shoes as opposed to the other. Following this particular line of thought, do you or I know how much we have invested in our Catholic faith? Is it just doing the minimum (\$20), or are we trying to give our best effort (\$120)?

As I mentioned on Christmas Eve, we have probably all known someone or heard of someone who walked away from our Catholic faith, because they “got nothing out of it.” What they are, in essence, saying is they did not either place or find value in the Catholic faith as it was presented and practiced. Some may accuse me of being too judgmental or too insensitive with this statement, however, we must, if we are willing to be honest, examine how our words and actions truly convey the values we place on things. If we plan to get something out of this year of dedication, then we must know how much we value our Catholic faith, and are willing to invest into our Catholic faith this coming year.

Allow me to conclude this “Introduction to our Year of the Parish and Eucharist” with a simple exercise to help you understand more about yourself and how much you value your Catholic faith. You can seek to perform either of the two tasks I now offer. (1) Many people keep a library of books or movies. They have spent money to maintain this library which they value. If you are one of these individuals, then go through your library and compare the number of books or movies you own which were purchased to help increase your knowledge and love of your Catholic faith as opposed to increasing your knowledge and love of other subjects or just for pure pleasure and entertainment. (2) If you would like another example, then examine the amount of time you spend in either prayer, study, or reflection in a day on either God or your Catholic faith. Time yourself for a week and then use those numbers to figure out the average amount of time you spend. This too can open your eyes to what you truly value and will provide all of us with a starting point from where we can seek to move forward in our knowledge and love of both God and our Catholic faith.